How to Master Strumming Quickly and Easily

Strumming the guitar can be frustrating if you are not shown the proper way to think and if you don't allow yourself some time to master some basic guitar rhythm skills. Here are some fundamental concepts that I want you to think about when practicing strumming.

1. Mute the guitar strings with your fretting hand (if you are a "righty," this would be your left hand). This will allow you to focus all of your attention on your strum.

2. ***For the following exercises***, the numbers will **ALWAYS** be "down strums" (strumming towards the floor), while the "+" symbol (also known as the "and" of the beat) will **ALWAYS** be an "up strum." This is the KEY to good strumming. Be diligent with this basic principle.

3. Each strum should be equal distance from the last. If you are counting 1 + 2 + 3 + 4 +, the count should be smooth and even like a watch or clock ticking (unless you are "swinging the beat," which is not recommended before learning a basic straight strum).

4. Say the rhythm out loud, slowly. Once you get the idea, try to say that same rhythm in a seam less "loop"(meaning, don't stop at the end of the 4+). Once you get the hang of this, it should stream together like 1 + 2 + 3 + 4 + 1 + 2 + 3 + 4 + 1 + 2 + 3 + 4 +

5. Once you can count it smoothly like this, strum it slowly and steadily. If you are new to strumming, try the very first strum, which is 4 down strums on the down beats.

6. When the strum calls for a space or void like 1 + 2 + 3 + 4 or 1 + 2 + 3 4+, your hand should STILL move as if it were going to hit the strings. This way your down strums will always be where your down beats are and your up strums will be where your up beats are. Get it?

For a video representation of this technique, check out:

Guitar Strumming Method

NOW for the exercises! For this study, take it slow and go through ALL levels in order.

Level 1

1 2 3 4

1 + 2 + 3 + 4 +

1 + 2 + 3 + 4

1 + 2 + 3 4 +

1 + 2 3 + 4 +

1 2 + 3 + 4 +

Level 2

1 + 2 3 + 4

1 2 3 + 4 +

1 + 2 + 3 4

1 2 + 3 + 4

1 + 2 3 4 +

1 2 + 3 4 +

Level 3

1 + 2 + 3 + + +

1 + 2 + + 4 +

1 + + 3 + 4 +

+ 2 + 3 + 4 +

Level 4

1	+	2	+		+		+
1	+		+		+	4	+
	+		+	3	+	4	+
1	+		+	3	+		+
	+	2	+		+	4	+

Level 5

1		2	+		+		+
1	+		+		+		+
	+		+		+		+
1		2	+	3			+
1		2	+		+	4	+

If you find that you are having trouble with a rhythm or two, check out this video which will teach you a couple of ninja guitar tricks and will help you through the rough patches and allow you to master any rhythm:

Master ANY Guitar Strumming Rhythm With This Secret Technique.

Remember to TAKE IT SLOW and don't get the fretting hand involved until you feel consistent about the strumming hand. With diligent time and practice you will get REALLY good at this.